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# Review Essays

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## **The Vindication of American Anti-Communism**

**by William A. Rusher**

*Operation Solo: The FBI's Man in the Kremlin.* By John Barron. (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1996. 384 pp. \$24.95.)

*Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism.* By Richard Gid Powers. (New York: The Free Press, 1995. 554 pp. \$30.00.)

*McCarthy and His Enemies: The Record and Its Meaning.* By William F. Buckley Jr. and L. Brent Bozell. (1954; reprint, Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1995. 439 pp. \$16.95, paper.)

The controversy over domestic communism that consumed such enormous energies in this country in the first decade after the end of World War II seems comfortably remote and irrelevant today. But in 1946 the cold war with the Soviet Union had just begun. In that mortal struggle, it was inevitable that the role of the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) would come under close scrutiny.

In the view of many of its critics, including some who had studied it carefully for many years (notably certain members of Congress and various ex-Communists), the CPUSA was simply an agent of the Soviet Union engaged in the grim work of undermining the United States. Beginning with the New Deal in the 1930s, these critics argued, a significant number of dedicated American Communists, most of whom passed themselves off as liberals, had managed to infiltrate the entertainment industry, the labor movement, and the federal government itself. Their achievements included egregious pro-Soviet propaganda in Hollywood, control of several important unions, espionage against the U.S. government, and the exercise of pro-Soviet influence over American foreign policy.

This domestic network was either little noticed or regarded as little cause for concern until the onset of the cold war, when the Soviet Union turned in a matter of months from our wartime ally into a menacing superpower seemingly bent on world domination. This new state of affairs, it was argued,

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